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**STATE OPENS WOERD AVENUE BOAT LAUNCH AND
GREENWAY ON UPPER CHARLES RIVER**
Barnes Family Honored for Donation to Provide Greenway Stewardship

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) today celebrated the completion of the latest phase of the Upper Charles Greenway Reclamation Project at the site of the newly reconstructed Woerd Avenue Boat Launch and half-mile Greenway in Waltham.

With the previous completion of nearly five miles of river corridor greenways along the Upper Charles River Reservation running through Newton, Weston, Watertown, and Waltham, today's opening is the next to last step in realizing the vision of a continuous public access and green space along DCR's Upper Charles River Reservation.

"We're very proud of the new state-of-the-art, ADA accessible, double-size motor boat launch, new canoe launch and parking lot here at Woerd Avenue in Waltham," said DCR Commissioner Stephen H. Burrington. "Also, the wetlands along the Greenway created as part of this project will help keep the parking lot from flooding and strengthen the ecology of the riverbank."

During today's ceremonies, DCR also dedicated the Arthur and Sidney Barnes Memorial Greenway along the river in recognition of a donation to provide long-term stewardship of the entire six miles of the new Greenway created as part of the Greenway Reclamation Project.

The children of Arthur and Sidney Barnes contributed \$410,000 to the endowment fund of The Trustees of Reservations (TTOR) in honor of their deceased parents, who had a deep love for the Charles River. With this generous donation, DCR and TTOR established an exciting partnership to provide long-term stewardship of the Greenway.

"One of DCR's biggest ongoing challenges is providing proper stewardship throughout our extensive park system," said Commissioner Burrington. "Thanks to the philanthropy of the Barnes family, and our exciting partnership with The Trustees of Reservation, the beauty of this new Greenway along the Charles River will be maintained for years to come."

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This Woerd Avenue phase of the project, completed at a cost of approximately \$500,000, included a full restoration of DCR's Woerd Avenue parking lot, riverbank restoration and planting, construction of a boat launch and dock, and the construction of a new half-mile greenway along the Charles River connecting the boat launch to Prospect Street. The new Woerd Avenue Boat Launch site is an ADA accessible launch for motor boats and canoes. This is a key launch site, for it is the only formal motor boat launch on the Upper Charles from Moody Street to above South Natick Dam.

The Upper Charles River Reservation Greenway Reclamation Project, initiated in 1994 by the Metropolitan District Commission, predecessor to DCR, aims for long-term ecological restoration of the river corridor, returning the six mile section of the river to a self-sustaining natural environment. The project scope includes the development of continuous pedestrian pathways nestled alongside the scenic river, linking surrounding communities with the Esplanade in Cambridge and Boston.

For more information on the Upper Charles River Reservation, visit DCR's web site at <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/parks/metroboston/upperChas.htm>.

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